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SUMMARY: THE SURPRISE APPOINTMENT OF HUA KUO-FENG AS ACTING PREMIER DOMINATED THE CHINA SCENE THIS WEEK. THE APPOINTMENT APPEARS A MAJOR SETBACK FOR SENIOR VICE PREMIER TENG HSIAO-PING, BUT THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT IT WILL CAUSE ANY IMMEDIATE CHANGES IN EITHER PRC DOMESTIC OR FOREIGN POLICY. INDEED, ON THE EXTERNAL SIDE, THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A RETURN VISIT TO PEKING BY FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON AND COMMENTS ON HIS "IMPORTANT ROLE" IN SINO-US RELATIONS, INDICATE A PRC DESIRE TO SIGNAL THE CONTINUITY OF THEIR ONGOING FOREIGN POLICY. END SUMMARY

1. HUA KUO-FENG NAMED ACTING PREMIER

IN AN UNEXPECTED MOVE, SIXTH-RANKING VICE PREMIER HUA KUO-FENG HAS LEAPFROGGED TO THE POSITION OF ACTING PREMIER. HUA, WHO IS ALSO A POLITBURO MEMBER AND MINISTER OF PUBLIC SECURITY, THUS ASSUMES THE POST WHICH MOST OBSERVERS--INCLUDING MANY PRC CADRES--THOUGHT WOULD BE GIVEN TO FIRST VICE PREMIER TENG HSIAO-PING. TENG'S FAILURE TO OBTAIN THE POST MAY BE LINKED TO RECENT LEFTIST CRITICISMS IN THE MEDIA ACCUSING CERTAIN ELEMENTS WITHIN THE PARTY OF TRYING TO RENEGE ON CULTURAL REVOLUTION REFORMS. CHAIRMAN MAO'S ROLE IN THE NEW APPOINTMENT REMAINS TANTALIZINGLY OBSCURE.

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2. WITH THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF HUA'S APPOINTMENT ON THE FRONT PAGE OF PEOPLE'S DAILY FEBRUARY 8, THE REGIME HAS ONCE AGAIN INFORMED ITS PEOPLE THAT ANOTHER SUCCESSION SCENARIO HAD GONE AWRY. TENG WAS HAND-PICKED AND CAREFULLY GROOMED FOR NEARLY THREE YEARS BY CHOU EN-LAI (WITH THE APPARENT CONSENT OF CHAIRMAN MAO) TO TAKE OVER THE REINS

OF GOVERNMENT. HUA'S APPOINTMENT WAS OBVIOUSLY A COMPROMISE. HE HAS NEVER TRAVELED ABROAD, HAS FEW TIES WITH THE MILITARY, AND HIS EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN ALMOST TOTALLY CONFINED TO INTERNAL AFFAIRS. IN THE ABSENCE OF A NEW PARTY LISTING, IT IS DIFFICULT TO GAUGE THE EXACT DAMAGE TO TENG'S POLITICAL CAREER, BUT TO US IT APPEARS CONSIDERABLE. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.

3. HUA KUO-FENG IS IN HIS MID-FIFTIES--A MERE YOUTH BY CHINESE LEADERSHIP STANDARDS--AND BEGAN HIS PARTY CAREER IN CHAIRMAN MAO'S NATIVE DISTRICT OF HUNAN. HE ADVANCED IN HUNAN DURING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, ALTHOUGH LATER IN THAT PERIOD AND AGAIN IN 1974 HE WAS IMPLICATED IN RADICAL ACCUSATIONS OF SUPPRESSING RED GUARD ACTIVITY. AS MINISTER OF PUBLIC SECURITY SINCE JANUARY, 1975, HE HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING THE LID ON RECALCITRANT WORKERS AND YOUTH WHOSE BOISTEROUS ACTIVITIES HARMED PRODUCTION IN 1974. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

4. MOST RECENTLY, HUA GAVE THE CONCLUDING ADDRESS TO THE CONFERENCE ON LEARNING FROM TACHAI IN AGRICULTURE. COMING TO PEKING IN THE WAKE OF THE LIN PIAO AFFAIR IN 1971, HUA WORKED SMOOTHLY UNDER CHOU'S LEADERSHIP AND WAS NEVER IDENTIFIED WITH RADICAL POLICIES. HUA ALSO APPEARS TO BE THE POLITBURO MEMBER CHARGED WITH SUPERVISION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY--THE MOST RECENT AREA TO COME UNDER ATTACK FROM LEFTIST CIRCLES. ALL IN ALL, HUA SEEMS LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM TENG, ONLY MORE ACCEPTABLE. HE IS PROBABLY BETTER LIKED BY MAO AND BEARS NONE OF THE STIGMA OF THOSE WHO WERE PURGED DURING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION (PEKING 210; STATE 30979; HONG KONG 1433). LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

5. IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE ESCALATES AT THE CENTER . . .
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ALMOST COINCIDING WITH NEWS OF HUA'S APPOINTMENT, PEOPLE'S DAILY FEBRUARY 6 CARRIED A HARD-HITTING ARTICLE TURNING THE RECENT DEBATE ON EDUCATION AND SCIENCE (WR 5) INTO A FULL-SCALE DEFENSE OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION (HONG KONG 1403). THE ARTICLE CLAIMS THAT RECENT ATTACKS ON THE POST-CR EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC SYSTEM ARE REALLY A DISGUISED ATTACK ON THE ENTIRE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, MOUNTED BY CAPITALIST ROADERS IN THE PARTY WHO WERE EXPOSED IN THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION BUT HAVE SINCE RETURNED TO POWER, AN OBVIOUS SWIPE AT REHABILITEES SUCH AS TENG HSIAO-PING.

6. OTHER SIGNS OF A HEIGHTENED IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE INCLUDE SEVERAL ARTICLES, ONE OF THEM IN RED FLAG, WHICH DENOUNCE AS "ECLECTICISTS"--AND THUS REVISIONISTS--THOSE WHO ATTEMPT TO

ARGUE THAT WHILE POLITICS IS IMPORTANT, SO ARE ECONOMICS, PROFESSIONALISM, AND TECHNOLOGY. WHILE THESE ARTICLES USUALLY INCLUDE AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS STILL ONE OF CHINA'S GOALS, THEY CONSTITUTE A STRONG DENUNCIATION OF ANY WEAKENING OF TOTAL IDEOLOGICAL CONTROL OVER ALL ASPECTS OF SOCIETY. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

7. . . . BUT NORMALCY REIGNS IN THE PROVINCES

IN THE PROVINCES, NORMAL ACTIVITIES HAVE THUS FAR CONTINUED, INCLUDING A LEARN FROM TACHAI CONFERENCE WHICH OPENED FEBRUARY 7 IN INNER MONGOLIA. IN KWANGTUNG, SEVERAL CULTURAL REVOLUTION PURGEES REAPPEARED FOR THE FIRST TIME OVER THE NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAY, INCLUDING FORMER PROVINCIAL PARTY SECRETARY YIN LIN-PING, WHO HAD BEEN SEVERELY CRITICIZED AS A CAPITALIST ROADER AND COLLABORATOR OF TAO CHU. IN YUNNAN, A NEW YEAR'S LEADERSHIP TURNOUT REVEALED THAT KUNMING MILITARY REGION COMMANDER WANG PI-CHENG HAS SUFFERED A DEMOTION IN HIS NON-MILITARY TITLES (KUNMING BROADCAST JANUARY 30), CONTINUING THE TREND OF REMOVING ACTIVE MILITARY LEADERS FROM HIGH-PROFILE POLITICAL POSITIONS THEY GAINED FOLLOWING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION. UNCLASSIFIED

8. THE UNITED STATES

NCNA FEBRUARY 6 ANNOUNCED THAT, AT THE INVITATION OF THE PRC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GOVERNMENT, FORMER PRESIDENT AND MRS. NIXON WILL REVISIT PEKING BEGINNING FEBRUARY 21, THE FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR FIRST VISIT TO CHINA. THE NCNA ANNOUNCEMENT CITED NIXON'S "SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN IMPROVING SINO-US RELATIONS" AND CAME AT THE SAME TIME AS THE FIRST PUBLIC IDENTIFICATION OF HUA KUO-FENG AS ACTING PREMIER. TAKEN TOGETHER, THE TWO ANNOUNCEMENTS SEEM PART OF AN ORCHESTRATED PRC EFFORT TO:

(A) EVINCE A SENSE OF CONTINUITY OF FOREIGN POLICY UNDER THE NEW LEADERS AND (B) SIGNAL CHINA'S ONGOING INTEREST IN FURTHER PROGRESS TOWARD THE NORMALIZATION OF US-CHINA TIES. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

9. SOVIETS

THE TWO MAJOR SELF-GENERATED, ANTI-SOVIET ARTICLES BY THE PRC MEDIA THIS WEEK WERE ON FEBRUARY 4 WHEN A PEOPLE'S DAILY EDITORIAL BLASTED SOVIET INTERFERENCE IN ANGOLA AND AN NCNA CORRESPONDENT CONDEMNED SOVIET ACTIONS AGAINST THE MOLDAVIAN MINORITY. SINCE THEN, THERE HAS BEEN A STEADY REPLAY OF ANTI-SOVIET COMMENT BY FOREIGN LEADERS AND PRESS, PARTICULARLY ON THE ANGOLAN SITUATION, BUT A DEFINITE LULL IN PEKING'S

OWN ANTI-SOVIET POLEMICS. THIS DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN
ACCOMPANIED HOWEVER, BY A GENERAL DECLINE IN THE VOLUME OF
ALL PRC COMMENT ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.
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